To: Sylvia Hamilton via email Date: February 10, 2006

Subject: February 4, 2006 Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Perchlorate Community Advisory Group was held at the San Martin Lions Club, 12415 Murphy Avenue, San Martin, on February 4, 2006 at 2 pm.

I. Ms. Sylvia Hamilton, PCAG Chair, led the **Pledge of Allegiance**

II. **Administrative Items**

A. Introductions

B. *Attendee Sign-in Sheets:* Ms. Hamilton advised people to add their name and contact information to the sign-in sheet if they would like to be on the PCAG mailing list.

C. *Open Forum:* Mr. Thomas Mohr, Santa Clara Valley Water District, announced that the Perchlorate Conference binder would be put in the Morgan Hill repository for community residents. The binder includes information from the GRA Perchlorate conference and all the latest perchlorate news and information.

D. December 9th, 2005 meeting minutes: Approved as written

E. Additional Topics: Mr. Mohr will give a short presentation on the Perchlorate Symposium

III. **Presentations/ Discussions**

A. RWQCB Update

1. Regional Board (RB) provided a proposed resolution to allow Olin to stop bottled water to 178 residents using 78 wells at levels below 4 ppb for four quarters per State Board order. Six of the wells are within 500 feet of a well with a perchlorate concentration greater than 6 ppb, so Olin will have to monitor those six wells semi-annually. As plume characterization continues, the Regional Board will review testing results and require additional monitoring if necessary. Olin currently provides bottled water for about 815 wells.

   Q: Is there any indication these wells are pulling from the same aquifer?
   A: No, the wells are constructed differently.

   Q: If 78 wells are removed, how many wells will remain? Will there be enough wells for monitoring?
   A: About 737 wells would remain. The RB will also watch the results of all wells in the basin.

   Q: To what do you contribute the downward trend?

A: The amount of rainfall this last year could have affected these samplings and there could be other factors. Unlike volatile organic compounds like gasoline, perchlorate does not degrade naturally unless very special conditions exist. Those conditions do not exist in the Llagas Subbasin.

Q: At the GRA Symposium, information regarding health implications of perchlorate was presented. Was there anything that would clarify the Llagas Subbasin situation? A: Mr. Mohr replied that he did not think the information would affect the drinking water standard. The Department of Health Services (DHS) is required to set the drinking water standard as close as possible to the Public Health Goal, taking into account technical and economic feasibility.

Craig O'Donnell, Assembly Member (ASM) John Laird's Office, summarized the ASM's comment letter to the Regional Board on the proposed resolution. Arguments included the movement of groundwater in the basin and assurance that if the perchlorate levels go back up, other monitored wells will provide a timely alert for those no longer monitored. As a result, Mr. Laird proposed that a permanent monitoring system. Mr. Laird wants public health to be protected and the least burden placed on the well users.

Mr. Mohr summarized the Santa Clara Valley Water District's comment letter. The District agrees with ASM Laird's comments. The Water District has looked at the four quarters of data from the wells that are being taken off bottled water and agree that the levels have been low consistently. One District concern is whether, given how fast groundwater is moving, 500 feet is enough of a buffer to ensure the next well is safe from contamination. The RB should try to make more monitoring requirements for wells that show to be a little more vulnerable to being contaminated. In addition, the RB should make monitoring requirements more clear and be vigilant in analyzing data and protecting public health.

Ms. Hamilton commented that the residents did not contaminate groundwater; they are not the responsible party. She does not want monitoring to go on the backs of the residents throughout the plume.

Mr. Athey said that RB staff will look at the Characterization report and ongoing monitoring results. If trends turn around, they will require additional monitoring. The goal is to ensure no one is drinking water with perchlorate concentrations above 6 ppb.

2. *Llagas Subbasin Characterization Work Plan* – The Regional Board issued a letter to Olin on 12/1/05 requiring additional information be provided in association with the submitted work plan. The Characterization Report is due 3/30/06. Olin has already round that the plume is deeper and further east than previously believed, so they installed an additional monitoring well on Fisher Avenue.

3. *Northeast Perchlorate Occurrence* – On November 5, 2006, the RB received a letter from the City of Morgan Hill requesting that they assign responsibility for perchlorate contamination in the City's Nordstrom Park well to Olin. RB staff responded saying that they could not immediately address the issue. However, now the RB has more staff and will be able to dedicate more time to the issue. The new group has tasked

themselves with making a determination during the first quarter of this year. All new and existing information about the case will be reviewed.

Q: What information is being used to make the determination?
A. The entire file.

Q. What does the new information consist of?
A: The 4th Quarter Monitoring Report and information on potential sources of perchlorate.

Q: Will any CAO come through staff or the Board?
A: The Board.

4. *Tennant Site Soil and Groundwater Cleanup* – The RB received the 90% Design Report for Onsite Treatment and Reinjection about one month ago and the staff is currently reviewing it. The RB hopes to issue a letter approving the report soon, but may need to make clarifications to ensure no perchlorate is reinjected. PCAG will get a copy of the letter as soon as it is ready.

5. *Cleanup Level Report* – Olin submitted a report, as required by the Regional Board timeline, in which they proposed a long-term clean up level of 11 ppb. State Water Board policy (Resolution 92-49) requires that cleanup levels be established based on background conditions. If cleanup to background is infeasible, then a cleanup level as high as the water quality objective, drinking water standard, or, in this case, the Public Health Goal, may be established. The cleanup level proposal is premature and should have been based on other studies, such as the feasibility study.

Ms. Hamilton commented that Olin did not state this as a done deal. They put it out as a proposal. They prefer to complete the appropriate investigations prior to making this proposal.

Q: Has Olin been directed to sample outside of the plume, i.e. west of 101, to get background information?
A: We do not know, but background is non-detect until proven otherwise. The Characterization Report should address background conditions. In addition, Olin has done sampling far to the Northeast. The District is working on a background and source investigation.

Q: What level does non-detect mean.
A: It depends on the analytical methods. Mr. Mohr commented that the District will be looking for perchlorate in areas that are not likely to be affected by the plume and detection limits will be 0.5 ppb.

Mr. Hernandez reported that Olin understands they need to go through the process established in Resolution 92-49. He is unsure why the CAO required a Cleanup Level Report at this time, but it may have been something that came up during discussion on the draft CAO as a means of getting Olin's approach to how they would go about proposing a cleanup level.

Q. Will the Regional Board's response to Olin clarify that the Resolution 92-49 process means that Olin needs to look at background water quality and not use a health-based process to propose the cleanup level?
A. Yes.

B. *Domestic Well Ion-Exchange System Update (Thomas Mohr)* – There are no new developments in getting Ion-exchange systems certified by DHS. Olin is working with US Filter to submit testing protocols to DHS for review, which are expected to show that these systems are not only working but are proven to be safe as well.

C. *Groundwater Guardian (Tracy Hemmeter, Santa Clara Valley Water District)* – The Groundwater Guardian program is sponsored by The Groundwater Foundation. The goal of the program is to increase awareness and protection of groundwater. The Groundwater Foundation designated PCAG as a Groundwater Guardian Community in 2004 and 2005, based on its efforts to provide the community with information on perchlorate and the Olin case. Last year's activities included expanding the interested parties list and getting information in the media. Matt King, with the Gilroy Dispatch and Morgan Hill Times, has been including milestones and meeting dates in his articles. Also, we were successful at expanding the interested parties list. This year we plan to develop a PCAG brochure, which will include important information regarding perchlorate in the area. Ms. Hemmeter requested input on other ways of getting information out to the community.

Comment: Public access channels are a good way to reach more people in the community. The more information the public gets the easier it will be for them to make informed decisions about their own perchlorate situations. Gavilan Community College is a good way to get access to the channel and the network.

Comment: A High School or 4-H project would be a good way to get families involved in the problem

IV. Additional Topics

A. *Perchlorate Working Group (PWG)* – No meeting

B. *Water District Federal Grants & Project Planning Update*- The Water District is moving ahead on the next phase by identifying wells that are good candidates for sampling. A panel was put together consisting of perchlorate experts from in and out of the State who gave suggestions of how to proceed. Work is expected to begin in 3 to 4 months.

C. *Groundwater Resources Association (GRA) Perchlorate Symposium*–About 200 hundred people attended this year's conference. New information that might have a bearing on this case includes the potential for household bleach being a source of perchlorate. Bleach that has been sitting on the shelf for a significant amount of time and then poured down the drain can contaminate water. Another study found 0.2 ppb perchlorate in rainwater. There were also case studies on treatment technologies. The Symposium also featured a lively discussion on replacement water orders and whether replacement water should be provided when perchlorate concentrations are approaching 6 ppb or after they have already exceeded 6 ppb. Ms. Sylvia Hamilton gave a presentation about the importance of community involvement in such matters.

D. *Water Dispensers* - Ms Hamilton informed the committee of the importance of having water dispensers cleaned and urged someone to take the initiative to find out what the best method would be. Mr. Bob Cerruti mentioned that his family was on bottled water for three years and no one had cleaned the dispenser, which had collected a lot of dirt over the years. Mr. Peter Forest added that dirt comes from the dust in the air in your house. Ms. Hamilton said that a flyer should be made with information regarding the maintenance of water dispensers. Mr. Cerruti agreed to help find out more information.

V. Next Meeting – Friday, March 3rd from 2 – 4 pm

A. Suggested Agenda Topics

1. Trends

2. Information about water dispensers

3. 4th quarter report

4. Isotopes – Mr. Mohr volunteered to provide information abut isotope data along with Mr. Hector Hernandez

5. Invite Olin to give a presentation on the 4th quarter monitoring report

6. More discussion about community outreach & involvement and working with high schools